



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Conservation of the Chrau-Jro Cultural Values through Community Tourism in Ba Ria Vung Tau, Vietnam

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Jun 30, 2024 Accepted: Sep 12, 2024	The Chrau - Jro is one of the 53 ethnic groups in Vietnam. They do not live isolated in one area, but they live alternately with the Kinh people who are the biggest group in Ba Ria Vung Tau, Vietnam. However, the Chrau-Jro keep their own culture in their community because it identifies the quintessence formed during the historical development. This identity is created by them and expresses the unique features associated with the local economic and social development. Currently, with the development of advanced technology, as well as the modern tourism industry, their cultural characteristics have been facing challenges of brokenness. The exploitation is still fragmented and spontaneous in private enterprises, without specific planning. The descriptions of landmarks in tourism are not as accurate as the history of Chrau-Jro. Meanwhile, the tourism potential of Ba Ria Vung Tau province is in need of this type. To close the gap in the preservation of specific cultural values of the Chrau - Jro people, it is necessary to start with community tourism. This paper provides the original stories based on the tellings of the locals. This paper desires to provide interesting stories for the tourism industry with rich information and accurate content. Therefore, tourists can have more interesting information while contributing to the preservation of Chau-Jro culture.
Keywords Culture Chrau - Jro Ba Ria Vung Tau Community tourism	
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INTRODUCTION

According to the report of the Ethnic Minority Board of Ba Ria Vung Tau province (2020) and the General Statistics Office (2020), Ba Ria Vung Tau province has about 38 ethnic minorities living. The Chrau - Jro (Cho Ro) people have more than 1,200 households, with about 7,000 people, the ethnic group with the population behind the Kinh and the Chinese. The Chrau - Jro people live in districts of Chau Duc (the largest), Xuyen Moc, Phu My town, Ba Ria city and a few in Long Dien and Dat Do districts of Ba Ria Vung Tau province. Along with the Ma and Xtieng people, the Chrau - Jro people are one of the oldest resident ethnic groups in the province and are local residents of this land. The culture of Chrau - Jro ethnic people in Ba Ria Vung Tau is also maintained in a variety of forms in all fields such as folk singing, musical instrument performance, dance, folk tales, place names, and historical origins. history, etc. However, through the period of migration, the years of forest invasion and the development of society, cultural values tend to be gradually "disappeared" and deformed.

In order to preserve the cultural heritages of the Chrau - Jro people, the Party and State together with a few researchers have made great efforts to collect and restore the values that have been gradually

lost. However, there is also a limited team of people who are knowledgeable about the people of Chrau - Jro, there are shortcomings in research results, especially places, folk stories, and art forms. Among those works, researchers Huynh Toi - Lam Nhan - Phan Dinh Dung (2013) have found many cultural values of the Chrau - Jro people, but only in a few localities. Writer and poet Tran Tan Vinh is the son of the first Chrau - Jro people who has collected a lot of folklore, about the Chrau - Jro people in Ba Ria Vung Tau, about writing, about costumes stops at the level of finding and restoring, not widely applied to the young generation because it has not yet met the standard of living as well as the love and pride in their culture. In addition, artist Phan Thiet, artist Hoang Luong, artist Hoang Van, etc. have put a lot of effort into restoring the values of Chrau - Jro folk music, but they only responded during the research period, without a solution. for sustainable conservation. It is also worth noting that the names of places of the Chrau - Jro people today, have almost lost their original names, but only the common names of some people nearby and are recorded in the documents. The sad thing is that at present, there are a number of travel companies that have put the culture of the Chrau - Jro people into inappropriate tourism services, leading to the loss of their own cultural identity.

As can be seen, previous studies have shown that the culture of Chrau - Jro has contributed an important part in building the economy, culture and society; however, there has not been much research written on the Chrau - Jro people in Ba Ria Vung Tau, especially the most effective and sustainable conservation solutions. Therefore, this study aims to suggest a direction to preserve the culture of the Chrau - Jro in Ba Ria Vung Tau, Vietnam through community tourism.

RESEARCH METHODS

The paper employs a qualitative approach with an interview of 10 Chrau -Jro people who have experiences of historical stories connected with the name of the landmark in Ba Ria Vung Tau. The results continue to recheck and improve by the document reviews approach together historical study methods. Several data analysis techniques were applied, such as deep review from different reliable sources, and processing documents of comparing and contrasting. The interdisciplinary documents draw out the historical origins of the Chrau - Jro ethnic group to have an authentic, transparent, and objective view of the crucial process of development and improvement of the lives of the Chrau - Jro people. The authors also explored the specific results and the positive impacts of those results on society to draw comments and evaluate the cultural values of the Chrau - Jro people. The scope of research in the article expects to contribute in the current tourism development base on the Chrau - Jro cultural values in Ba Ria - Vung Tau, Vietnam.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Geographical location and history of the Chrau - Jro

Ba Ria Vung Tau Province is located in the Southeast of Vietnam, has an area of 2,047.66 km² of land, more than 100,000 square kilometers of continental shelf in the South of East Sea - Vietnam, it has very important economic potential, and it is also a strategic location for security and defense. Its borders is from the East Sea to the south, Ho Chi Minh City to the west, Binh Thuan province to the east, and Dong Nai province to the north (Le Thong, 2004, p.163).

The Chrau - Jro people are the long-standing residents of Ba Ria Vung Tau province in particular and the Southeast region in general, along with the Ma and Xtieng ethnic groups that were formerly known as the Ma emirate that was discovered by archaeologists in Cat Tien. The Cho Ro people have many different names such as: Chau Ro, Chrau Jro. Since 1975, the ethnic name Cho Ro has been officially used among 54 ethnic groups in Vietnam (Vietnam Social Science Committee - Institute of Ethnology, 1984, p.205). At present, the people live mainly in rural areas, the largest are Dong Nai province and Ba Ria Vung Tau province, and there is a strong interspersed with other ethnic groups

(Tran Tan Vinh, 1999, p. 17-24). By 2019, the population of Cho Ro people in the whole country is about 29,520 people (GSO, 2020).

With the distinct culture of the Chrau - Jro Ba Ria Vung Tau people, Vietnam is very favorable in developing community-based tourism. It is a model of tourism development in which the Chrau - Jro community is the one who provides products and services to tourists. Through tourism activities, the local people are responsible for preserving their culture in a sustainable way, in addition, they also share the economic benefits generated by tourism development for the locality, create jobs and increase income. Income for local communities, contribute to local poverty alleviation.

Community tourism destinations and products of Chrau - Jro people in Ba Ria Vung Tau province

As a locality with a large public beach, Binh Chau hot spring, the longest sea-viewing bridge in Southeast Asia, the historical relic of Con Dao prison along with many products that have been exploiting in Ba Ria Vung Tau. The area always provides timely travel services for domestic and foreign tourists. For community tourism services at the residence of the Cho Ro people are always interesting. Because this tourism product not only brings economic benefits but also helps preserve their culture longer. Some typical products of Chrau - Jro community culture.

Stories of Place-names

When coming to Ba Ria Vung Tau province, visitors will know stories about places and people here, including the Chrau - Jro people with fascinating stories of places such as: the legend of Ray River, the legend of Jang mountain, the legend of Binh Chau hot spring, etc., is associated with the natural phenomenon where they have been living.

STORY OF RAY AND XOAI RIVER

Based on tellings of Dieu Sao, Dao Thi Quy, and Tran Tan Vinh



River Ray Waterfall, Photographer: Dao Quoc

Once upon a time, there was a healthy Cho Ro young man named K'leu who led his dogs to hunt from early morning until the sun hung on the old bamboo tops but he could not hunt anything. He was hungry and tired, his legs were also tired, K'leu was about to find a place to rest but in front of the hounds, they kept aiming at the fierce barking to the leaf. K'leu was curious, took an arrow to try, and suddenly water gushed out from nowhere, forming a giant white tower, flowing around K'leu. K'leu's shock was not over, when the water said loudly: "Mother Sea! Take me back to Mother Sea!"

K'leu walked quietly. K'leu went to the west, the water went to the west. K'leu went to the East, the water also went to the East. Encountering a deep abyss, high rocks, K'leu had to go around or jump... the water also jumps jumped over and around. There was a strange thing since K'leu walked all day without feeling tired at all. When they reached Ta Dao forest, it was already dark, K'leu and the dogs also looked for a place to stay for the night. K'leu climbed up on the big rock to sleep, the dogs were lying around him. To protect K'leu, the water divided into seven streams surrounding K'leu.

Afraid that K'leu would be hungry or ill, no one would take him to meet his mother, the water immediately turned his health into air for him to breathe and help him live.

Early next morning, K'leu and the water continued to return to Mother Sea. Being familiar with the mountainous terrain when going down to the flat plain, many sections of K'leu have to swing the forest rope to get down. The water could not swing the forest rope, so it had to jump into a waterfall (Ranghi waterfall). After walking for a distance water met two high rockymountains blocking the way. Water couldn't climb up, so it flowed around K'leu as if asking for help. K'leu understood, ordered the hounds to dig, dig into a small nook, then told the water to use its tongue to lick it hard, and finally, the alley was deep, and the water rushed down the cliff. That alley is still in Xuan Son commune, Chau Duc district. In Cho Ro folklore, there is still a dialect about this legend: "River Ray has seven tops (streams), the abyss is as long as an elephant's head." Going for two days and one night, K'leu took Song Ray back to meet Mother Sea at Loc An estuary. Upon reaching Loc An, the Ray River meets the Hoa River. Each river wanted to come the sea first. Finally, River Ray let Hoa river go to meet Mother Sea first. Because the Hoa river went first, the water rose to the top. And Ray River followed, so the water flowed below.

Today, at Loc An estuary, where the Hoa River and Ray River meet, there are still two distinct water colors.

After receiving two loving children in her mother's big arms, the sea thanked to K'leu by giving many gifts from nature and sent her eldest son, the Dragon, to silently lead the crocodiles to form a raft to bring K'leu ashore with the dogs and return to the Village. And Mother Sea also sent Dragon to live in fresh water to prevent Crocodile and other large fishes from attacking K'Leu and his descendants. Because they were so happy to reunite, when they jumped ashore, K'leu's hunting dogs smeared dirt on the crocodile's head. Since then, the crocodile's head has been dirty like it is now. Because he did not know that it was the Dragon who brought him back to the village, K'Leu only told his descendants not to eat crocodile meat.

As time passed, K'Leu's descendants became more and more numerous, so many so that there was a saying that implied "seven days, seven nights will not end", this sentence implies: Newborns lie in bamboo hammocks, we step through the hammock for seven days, and seven nights are still not over. Just like every day the young men in the village hunt for the whole village, they always remember Mr. K'leu's advice that any animal should hunt and make food, except crocodiles. One day, they discovered a strange fish lying under the waterfall, because the fish was so big, they went to ask the whole village to help pull the fish up. The whole village missed pulling continuously until late at night to pull the giant fish up. Because the fish was so big, they invited people from other villages to come and share. All villages make strange fish to eat during the spring. For a long time, Mother Sea missed her son – Dragon. Knowing that the Dragons was killed by K'Leu descendants for food. The Mothet Sea was angry, she cursed the descendants of K'leu, whoever ate the dragon's meat would die the rest of them were attacked by fishes whenever they entered the water. Because the crocodile hated K'Leu's dog, that created a stain on its head, so it pioneered ashore to find Dogs and humans to attack. Through this incident, K'leu's descendants wandered all over the small stream, they do not dare to go near the swamps, near the big river and the sea. In addition, the place where the dragon died, the Cho Ro people consider it as a very sacred place because there is a dragon's soul. This is also consistent with the name of the Dragon that coincides with the name of the waterfall "Gograi".

THE LEGEND OF MT. JANG

Narrator: Tran Tan Vinh

The dam and the Jang Mountain, photographed by: Dao Quoc Trung



Krung's wife was pregnant, so she was craving for sour food. She asked her husband to go to the forest to get sour fruits for her. Because he loved his wife, Krung was so happy, he went into the deep forest to pick sour fruits for his wife. She ate and swallowed her whole stomach but still didn't want to stop. One day, while walking with her husband, she was surprised to see the ripe yellow leaves of the crape myrtle (*lagerstroemia*) floating in the wind, she thought that was a ripe plum mango, and she required Krung to pick it up. Krung refused and explained that it was the ancestral tree, my darling. If I climbs up to the top of the rape myrtle, I will realize the way back to my homeland and leave you and our child alone without anyone to raise our son. But the wife not only did not listen to Krung's explanation, but also became impatient and freckled, she required Krung to climb up the tree and pick fruits for her. He loved her so much, Krung climbed up the crape myrtle tree. As soon as he reached out his hand to pick yellow leaves for his wife, his arms turned into two large wings that flapped and flew up the sky towards his homeland. The wife looked at the top of the crape myrtle tree and waited for her husband tiredly.

Nine months and ten days later, Krung's wife gave birth to a very beautiful son. His eyes to ears, just like Krung. She diligently raised her child. When the child was seven years old, one day he asked his mother:

Why do I have only a mother and no father?

The mother quietly replied:

- You were born from the earth, from the rock, you have no parents or grandparents.

The child heard that and he felt very sad. Other people have fathers, mothers, grandparents, but he has no one.

One day, at noon, while the mother was slept deeply, the child caught the tick and put it in the mother's ear. The tick enters the mother's ear and bites. The mother, was in pain and tickling, she was sad, and pitiful, called her husband's name:

- Krung, Krung! Why am I so suffering like this? I have a husband and a child, but no one catches the ticks from my ear?

The child was hiding, listening to his mother's lament, and reproach, then he asked her:

- Why did you say that I was born from the earth, from the rock, without a father, but today you blame me and my father did not catch the ticks for you?

The mother had to tell the whole truth to her child. Hearing this, the child assured his mother:

Let me go to find my father.

Then the child was on his way. He went during the day and rested at night. From the full moon season to the waning moon season, the child has grown into a boy. Finally, he went to his father's hometown, saw his father standing on the tall floor, around people performing a purification ceremony for him to enter the spirit world. Seeing his father but not being able to get close to him, he was very sad. He thought vaguely. Finally he decided to turn into a falcon and landed on the roof of his father's house. Hearing the birds singing strange things, the father made a condition:

- Oh bird! If you are a divine bird, land on my sleeve.

The bird swooped down and landed on the father's sleeve. The father still does not believe, he made conditions again:

- If the bird is really a god, let the bird turn into a human for me to see.

The bird turned into a handsome young man and said:

- I am your son, you are my father.

The father still did not believe, he repeated conditions:

"Now, sharpen your knife so sharp that a fly swoops down and its legs will be cut off. Then you slide your foot on the blade without any harm and I will recognize you as my son.

The son followed his father's request, but the father was still skeptical, giving the condition one more time:

- Chop a banana leaf and spread it evenly on the branches of bamboo and thorns and pull it out without breaking the banana leaf, then I will accept you as my son.

The boy obeyed, but the father still did not believe, continued to issue conditions:

"Cut down that stream of water so that the source flows at the source, and the top flows at the top, then I will recognize you as my son."

The son responded to his father's request. He swung his sword to cut the flowing water in two, the top flowing at the top, the source flowing at the source.

For the power of fatherly love, the father held his son in his arms and mourns.

In order to record where the son cut the water into two, people and birds in Cho Ro dug up the earth to build up the mountain. It's Mount Jang. The part of the stream that flows down is named Dua Em stream (known as Khlung in Chrau - Jro language).

The backflow part is called Gai stream (Daq Loq, also known as Daq Vluc). These two streams flow around the foot of Nhang mountain and then join together at Luc stream (Daq Vluc) as if to reconnect the old flow that has been separated.

STORY OF BINH CHAU HOT SPRINGS

Based on the tellings of Duong Van Doi, Dao Van Cha, and Phan Thiet



Gate to Hot Springs, photographer: Dao Quoc Trung

In a village from the low hillside in the ancient land of Cu Mi, there lived a couple who loved each other very much, and when the boy hunted the girl to the low hillside to see off his lover. Day by day, the warmth of the love between the two warmed the whole mountain. One day, the girl cooked water to wash her hair. When the water boils, she daydreams because she missed her lover, not paying attention to the pot of water being knocked over by a gust of wind. The water spilled over the girl and withered the grass, the boy just arrived, both looked up to the sky and prayed for rain to save the trees and the villagers. Sympathizing with love, the young couple not only has feelings in love between men and women but also knows how to take care of the natural environment and the lives of others, it has rained to make the trees green again. However, the hot water overflowed and penetrated deep into the ground to form a hot spring. The girl, still feeling sorry for the villagers, the grass in this peaceful land and her face is pale and her health is gone. Another day, when the boy was hunting, she left the village. She went on and on, went over the hill, crossed the sea to a small island far from the mainland and died there. Later, this island was named Hon Ba in Phan Thiet. When the boy returned and did not find his wife, the husband searched until he could not find his wife. Because he loves his wife so much, the husband has vowed to transform into a freshwater spring next to a hot spring to nowadays.

Culture and arts

With a gentle, gentle, not flowery, unfussy sound in the art genre of the Cho Ro people, Ba Ria Vung Tau has expressed its own unique features.



Cho Ro gong set Ba Ria Vung Tau
Author: Dao Quoc Trung (May 2022 at Bau Chinh Cultural House, Chau



**Typical dishes of Cho Ro people in Ba Ria Vung Tau, Vietnam
(Dao Quoc Trung)**

Culture and art have many genres such as singing, dancing, singing, lullaby, performing musical instruments such as bamboo lute, lip zither, and gong. In which, Gong is considered the most unique that needs attention. Because, all festivals have the participation of performances of gongs. It can be said that the gongs is the most precious and important musical instrument of each Cho Ro family. People believe that gongs are sacred because they are indispensable in worshiping ceremonies, especially if there is someone who gets sick, the gongs will guide the way to "call" the gods for teacher Chang (gattung daq), Mrs. Bong (si-pam). "to the field" to cure diseases. The performance of Gongs is the pride of the cultural identity of the Chrau - Jro people. When performing, the low-pitched sound of the gongs is resounded as if affirming the spiritual vitality of the Cho Ro people still exists over time.

Cuisine

From October to March, the Cho Ro people harvest crops to make many typical dishes such as: Rice tubers, beef soup, roasted rice soup, banh day, banh mi, grilled meat, etc. The processing and cooking of the above dishes must be done by experienced people, because it is very difficult to cook.

Although there are not many ingredients in the forest, the people know how to use modern ingredients to create their own unique dishes.

Costumes, voices and festivals

Traditionally, Cho Ro men usually wear loinclothes (Cho Ro: tronh), bare top, and women wear skirts (xipus), bare chest. During the war, the people had to run away from the enemy in the forest, no one sewed anything, so the men had to beat the bark of the forest trees to make loinclothes, while the women had a cloth wrapped around their waists. After that, the compatriots absorbed modern costumes. Traditional costumes are only worn when there is a festival at a cultural house or when going to a competition, going to a performance like today

The language and writing of the Chrau - Jro people are the most important factors to create their own cultural identity. Because inside the voice of the Chrau - Jro people, there are always a lot of cultural factors, historical factors, human social factors.

The best known festival is the offering to the god of rice, the god of the forest is held after preparing to harvest the crop until sowing. This is a festival that is considered as the New Year of the Chrau - Jro community.

FORMS OF USING COMMUNITY TOURISM SERVICES

Stages of development



Life style and characteristics of the Cho Ro people are nomadic and interspersed but also preserve their cultural values. Along with the general trend from the strong penetration of cultures from other places, in addition to the fluctuations of the increasingly complex market economy and the explosion of digital technology, the younger generations have to follow in order to achieve their goals. fit with the times. Therefore, the preservation as well as the preservation of culture need to be associated with the common interests of the community, turning their culture into a product serving the community. To do this, first take advantage of each phase.

Phase 1: Planning Take advantage of both the on-site service and the door-to-door service.

On-site service is that visitors can order in advance so that local people can prepare everything to serve locally. This service must have a location that meets the standards of tourism services.

Door-to-door service is the service that visitors can order the products that will be delivered to visitors. This is a service that forces local people to have a team to transport and preserve the products well. Both of these services must be flexible to promptly respond to customer needs.

Coming to stages 2 and 3, a specific model is required: There must be land to grow raw materials, houses on stilts for people to live in, craft villages, lakes, rivers or mountains (can be artificial), near the area where many Chrau – Jro people are living, etc. to serve tourists better.

Phase 2 (2022-2023): Building models on a small scale

Model building at scale this is a service that visitors only come to see and enjoy on a small scale at a designated location. This is a service that requires land on a small scale, which can be received by the local people and supported by local and small construction investors.

Phase 3 (2024-2030): Building craft villages, tourist villages, combining tourist service points.

This is the stage where a specific location is needed that is suitable for topography, location, traffic, security, etc. to meet the criteria for tourist attractions. Therefore, at this stage, it is necessary to invest attention and investment of the government, as well as social organizations in the re-planning of the land associated with the stories and folk legends of the Chrau - Jro people. To make an impression for the tourist village.

Combination of tour services to Ba Ria Vung Tau

It can be said that in order to create a variety of products and services for tourists when coming to Ba Ria Vung Tau, more community cultural services of the Chrau - Jro people are needed.

This is also very suitable because before visitors go through the famous tourist attractions of Ba Ria Vung Tau province such as: Vung Tau beach, Long Hai beach, Phuoc Hai, Ho Coc, Ho Tram to Binh Chau hot spring are all suitable. Passing through Chau Duc district in Ba Ria Vung Tau province where many Chrau - Jro people reside.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Being citizens of the Chrau - Jro people, we see very clearly that our cultural values are always contained a lot in the unknown folk. But with the rapid change of society, people have changed the perception of a part of Cho Ro youth about their culture. They think that their culture is outdated or unusual, which makes them feel guilty about their culture.

On the other hand, some people learn about their culture as well as their life incompletely, but hastily conclude and apply it to reality, which is not original, leading to them feeling offended, so they become more culturally sensitive. Especially in the field of tourism, many businesses for the sake of business have used cultural values unlike their own. Since then, it has caused misunderstanding both about tourists and owners of that culture. We give the example of original costumes and innovative costumes that have been changed by many musicians or directors at their own discretion, which has caused many misunderstandings about the owners or not knowing who the real owners of the culture are. The same goes for the cuisine, if fact the bamboo tree to make rice is not available in every season, and the potato is neither. However, in reality, when there is a need, they are very quick to respond to visitors. The Chrau - Jro people are very honest, because they live a very gentlemanly life, since their products are made very carefully. This also proves that their forest specialties must be as true as they are to serve customers.

Therefore, to develop community-based tourism for the Cho Ro people, it is necessary to have the efforts of the government and sponsors with specific actions.

Regarding the products at different stages, the Chrau - Jro people will meet (phase 1) through pre-ordering for people to prepare (art, cuisine). Visitors are not surprised because in art there are all kinds of other cultures such as: storytelling in the form of theatrical, folk singing and dancing, costumes and the unique voice of the Chrau - Jro people. The cuisine also includes many of their signature dishes such as: Can wine, bamboo rice, grilled meat, soup, etc.

For the remaining phase, it has not been done yet, so it needs efforts from the government, social organizations, especially the Chrau - Jro community.

CONCLUSION

The Chrau - Jro people are long-time residents in the Southeast region along with Chrau - Ma, Chrau - Stieng, of which Ba Ria Vung Tau is the only one, only Chrau - Jro are indigenous people. With rivers, streams and mountains to form their cultural values here.

Through community tourism is the most important and necessary solution to preserve the broken cultural values in places of the Chrau - Jro people. Because only through tourism can the next generation of the Chrau - Jro people see the cultural value to the community and become aware of their culture.

Using their culture to serve community tourism also creates an additional source of income for themselves, for individuals and organizations to connect and create jobs locally.

Through community-based tourism, it not only helps to preserve the cultural values of the Chrau - Jro Ba Ria Vung Tau people, helps them to rely on their own culture to make a living, but also helps to spread and conserve their culture. Introduce many people in homeland and abroad to know of Chrau - Jro cultures.

The implementation of this model, it is easy to see because this model has been applied in many other areas. But whether it has been done in many places or continues to be used in Ba Ria Vung Tau province, it is necessary to ensure the quality of service as the owner of the culture. Not in a hurry, not for the sake of economic benefits, but to lose its true value, leading to misunderstandings between cultural owners and service users, between tourists and Chrau - Jro culture./.

FUNDING

This research is funded by Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City (VNU-HCM), under grant number ĐA2019-18b-01.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD STATEMENT

The study was conducted according to the guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by the Ethics Committee of Ho Chi Minh University of Social Sciences and Humanities (protocol code HCMUSSH and date of approval).

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

N/A

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

None

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

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